REMARKS

Claims 1-13 are pending in the application. Claims 1-13 are rejected. Claim 12 has been cancelled herein. Claim 11 as amended includes the same limitation recited in claim 2. Claim 13 is a dependent claim of claim 11.

Claims 1 and 13 are objected to because of the form of the claim and claims 1-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 1 and 13 have been amended to clarify applicant's claimed invention with regard to the objection. The remaining claims have likewise been amended to clarify applicant's claimed invention. It is respectfully requested the rejection under § 112 be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 3-5 and 9-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Mizuta et al. (U.S. 6,584,110). Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Mizuta et al. and claims 6-8 are rejected as being obvious over Mizuta et al. in view of Haggerty et al. (U.S. 6,331,983).

Statement as to Common Ownership

The under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) claims 2 and 6-8 are rejected as being obvious over the Mizuta reference. It is hereby submitted that the current application and U.S. Patent No. 6,584,110 were, at the time the invention of the current application was made, owned by Fujitsu Limited. Thus, pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 103(c), it is believed that the Mizuta reference should be disqualified as prior art.

Applicant relies on the foreign priority date of the present application being February 14, 2000. An English language translation together with a statement of accuracy is submitted herewith for Japanese Patent Application No. 2000-035018.

It is respectfully requested the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

In the Mizuta reference, a gateway on the caller side multicasts a connection request to gatesways on the receiver side in order to calculate an end-to-end delay time. Therefore, each of the receiver gateways has to return a response to the caller gateway whether or not the receiver gateway itself can communicate call-connecting information to the private exchange on the receiver side.

In contrast to the cited reference in applicant's claim 1 each of the second gateways has the limitation "when receives the call-in enable/disable inquiry message, judges whether the second gateway itself can communicate the call setting message to the second line switching network so that each of the second gateways transmits a call-in enable/disable inquiry response message to the first gateway only when it is judged that the second gateway itself can communicate the call setting message to the second line switching network."

Thus, each second gateway performs judging processing to judge whether or not each second gateway returns the response message to the first gateway.

The Mizuta reference does not teach nor suggest the above-mentioned judging processing and processing to return the response message according to a result of the judging processing, namely, the Mizuta reference does not teach nor suggest each of the second gateways of the present invention recited in claim 1. Therefore, the present invention recited in claim 1 is distinguished from the Mizuta reference.

In claims 3, 4 and 5, the first gateway multicasts the call-in enable/disable inquiry message toward the second gateways, and each of the second gateways participates/leaves to/from a multicast group to receive the call-in enable/disable inquiry message, dynamically.

The Mizuta reference merely discloses that the caller gateway multicasts the connection request to the receiver gatesways, which are fixed. Further, the Mizuta reference does not teach or suggest participating/leaving to/from the multicast group of each of the receiver gateways. Moreover, since each of the receivers do not participate/leave to/from the multicast group dynamically, the Mizuta reference does not teach and suggest configuration that each second gateway judges whether or not the second gateway itself participates/leaves to/from the multicast group recited in claims 4 and 5. Therefore, the present invention recited in each of claims 3, 4 and 5 is distinguished from the Mizuta reference.

One of the features of applicant's claim 9 is that the first gateway unicasts the call setting message to a specific gateway, which is one of the second gateways, then, if the specific gateway cannot communicate the call setting message to the second line switching network, the first gateway multicasts the call-in enable/disable inquiry message.

In contrast the Mizuta reference does not teach nor suggest that the caller gateway unicasts the connection request to one of the receiver gateways, firstly. Therefore, the present invention recited in claim 9 is distinguished from the Mizuta reference.

One of the features of applicant's claim 10 is that "when the first gateway receives the call setting message from the first line switching network, the first gateway selects either unicasting the call setting message to a specific gateway, which is one of the second gateways, or multicasting the call-in enable/disable inquiry message to the IP packet network."

In contrast the Mizuta reference does not teach or suggest that the caller gateway selects either unicasting or multicasting. Therefore, the present invention recited in claim 9 is distinguished from the Mizuta reference.

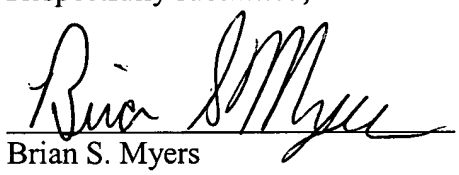
As pointed out above claim 11 includes similar features as recited in claim 2.

Claim 13 is dependent from claim 11. Therefore, the inventions recited in claims 11 and 13 are distinguished from the Mizuta reference.

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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